Die monotheistische Trias des Mittelalters im welthistorischen Vergleich

Michael Borgolte, Berlin

This article compares medieval Europe as a region of three monotheistic religions with China and India. The western world was divided amongst Christians, Jews and Muslims, and South Asia (Brahmanism, Jainism, Hinduism, temporarily also Buddhism) and East Asia (Daoism, Confucianism, Buddhism) were also marked by different religions or “world views”. As in Europe, religious discussions in Asia were also always threatened with failure, but it was possible to deal with religious differences in a much more unbiased way. During the 16th century Akbar the Great, ruler of the Mughals in India, could even venture to attempt a synthesis of Islam and Hinduism, i.e. mono- and polytheism, even though this venture failed.

Monolog als Dialog, Dialog als Monolog

Rémi Brague, Paris

Were there interreligious dialogues in the Middle Ages? The historical framework was asymmetric: in the Islamic Empire, there had been Jews and Christians from the beginning, initially forming a majority; in Christian countries, there were Jews, but no Muslims, barring short periods of Byzantine or Spanish reconquest. The historical context was asymmetric, too: the three main religions arose one after the other, so that later religions allegedly knew earlier ones and because of that displayed little curiosity. Everywhere, the official state religion kept other beliefs at bay, except during the short-lived Mongol rule in the 13th century. Apologetic literature mainly aimed at dissuading believers from leaving their religion, while efforts to understand the position of the other with sympathy remained exceptional. Philosophers merely borrowed neutral, philosophical ideas from thinkers belonging to other religions merely neutral, philosophical ideas. Written accounts of encounters between religions stem from committed and hence biased believers, and are in fact monologues. History gives evidence of few real dialogues, since they took place under the supervision of rulers belonging to one of the contending religions. Our ideal of an open discussion lacks medieval forebears.

Méthaporologie et théologie

Olivier Boulnois, Paris

How to spell out the metaphors contained in Holy Scripture and ascribe to them a coherent spiritual sense, compatible with reason? The three monotheistic religions all face this question. By affirming that Scripture interprets Scripture but that, when it does not, one has to have recourse to reason, Augustin lays the foundations of a dogmatic theology. Regarding Islam, al-Fârâbî, on the other hand, considers that truth is fully accessible to philosophy only, while religion is a rhetorical rendering aimed at ordinary people; according to Avicenna, images appealing to the imagination are to be preferred to plain truths that fail to motivate the masses, since religion should ensure obedience. In Judaism, Maimonides’ esoterism attempts to rule out that these two relations to truth – philosophy and religion – intersect. With Thomas Aquinas the distinction between exegesis and science entails a gradual separation between symbolic theology and speculative theology. Hence, the three monotheistic religions have distinct ways of handling the metaphors contained in their Scriptures.
Logik und Religion: Entstehungsbedingungen autonemer Philosophiebegriffe im lateinischen und im syrisch-arabischen Raum (6.–12. Jh.)

Matthias Perkams, Jena

The Latin, Syriac and Armenian translations of philosophical texts in the sixth century show remarkable common traits: Boethius, Sergius of Rēsʿaynā/Probā and David merely rendered and commented largely the same set of Aristotelian writings on logic (Eisagoge, Categories, Hermeneutics, Analytica priora). Apparently, they followed a common agenda, which counteracted the personal statements of the translators that they intended to translate, at the very least, all of Aristotle's works. Consequently, their works only present a rather limited picture of philosophy as a worldview in its own right, focussing on the function of logic as a methodological tool for science. Later on, both al-Fārābī and Peter Abelard characterize philosophy, in Arabic as well as in Latin, as an autonomous worldview relying exclusively on rational arguments, whereas religion depends also on scripture or prophecy. Al-Fārābī defines philosophy according to the apodeictic standard of Alexandrian Aristotelianism, whereas Abelard focusses solely on ratio and the search for the truth. While al-Fārābī sees a convergence of philosophical and religious doctrine, Abelard's philosophy stands outside any concrete religion, exemplifying the idea of a secular rationality.

Göttlicher Messias und Inkarnation: Die Rolle der rabbinischen Überlieferungen in der Disputation zu Barcelona

José Costa, Paris

Recent scholarship about Judaism in Late Antiquity has revealed the existence of a widespread binitarian and anthropomorphic conception of God, particularly among the rabbis. Furthermore, Jewish binitarian and anthropomorphic texts have obvious similarities with contemporary Christian conceptions about Jesus as a divine Messiah who was incarnated in a human body. Therefore, it is not surprising that during the Disputation of Barcelona (1263) the converted Jew Pablo Christiani used rabbinic binitarian and anthropomorphic traditions to justify the veracity of Christian messianic doctrine. By contrast, his Jewish challenger Nahmanides made considerable efforts to show that these texts should not be understood in a literal way. It is likely, however, that his metaphorical interpretations of the texts did not always reflect his real opinion, for Nahmanides was also a follower of the medieval Kabbala, which was to a large extent in line with binitarian and anthropomorphic traditions of the ancient rabbis.

Andersgläubige in der Religionsphilosophie von Maturidi

Musa Bağraç, Hamm

This essay discusses the question of how to deal with the diversity of religions in a pluralistic society from an Islamic point of view. At present, we find increasingly exclusivist representatives who believe that only their religion is the right one. At the same time, the number of inclusivists – those who are of the opinion that the others are partly correct – is increasing. I discuss this question from the perspective of the classical theological school of the Maturidiyya, to which the majority of present-day Turkish Muslims, for example in Germany, belong. Today's Maturidi researchers are part of both exclusivist and inclusivist groups. These views are compared and finally assessed. Here, I go one step further and ask if one could also develop pluralistic approaches from the theology of the Maturidiyya for a serious interreligious dialogue.
Mehr als genug. Anselm von Canterburys Versöhnungslehre als philosophischer Beitrag in frühen interreligiösen Begegnungen

Katrin König, Tübingen

In this article, I develop a reinterpretation of Anselm of Canterbury’s *Cur Deus homo* as a philosophical contribution to early interreligious encounters. In a first step, the broader historical context and concrete biographical and textual evidence are evaluated with a view to situating Anselm of Canterbury’s disputed Christological and soteriological reflections within the context of early interreligious encounters. This is followed by an inquiry into how Anselm takes up central objections of Islamic and Jewish thinkers of his time against Christian belief in the incarnation of and reconciliation through Christ. I then analyse how Anselm argues that the Christian understanding of the incarnation and salvation through Christ is neither irrational nor incompatible with the perfection of God and how it is not without a reason, but that it is more than sufficient for the reconciliation of humans with God. This leads to a final discussion about the relevance and limitations of Anselm’s approach to philosophical reasoning with regard to contemporary interreligious dialogue today.

**Anselm und der Islam**

Emery de Gaál, Chicago

While it is true that Anselm argues on internal, material grounds in matters theological, there is no gainsaying that there are indeed – as he repeatedly admits – invisible, non-Christian interlocutors he engages throughout his rich *œuvre*. This essay attempts to pinpoint passages in the *Corpus Anselmi* that might also be formulated by Anselm in response to Muslim objections to the Christian statement of faith. To convey a better appreciation for this concern, the article first discusses Muslim statements concerning the sublime nature of God, then suggests excerpts in Anselm’s writings that may react to Muslim misgivings, and finally provides a timeline comparing significant dates in Christian–Muslim relations with the life and writings of Anselm. Uniquely Anselmian expressions, such as *remoto Christo* or *sola ratione*, thus gain contours. Though the *Quran* and other important texts of Islam will be translated only later, the cosmopolitan abbot of Bec and later Archbishop of Canterbury is acutely aware of the historic events in the larger Mediterranean–Near Eastern area and is mindful of Islam’s basic tenets.

**Das Schlusskapitel von *Cur Deus homo* und seine Relevanz für eine heutige Theologie der Religionen**

Gerhard Gäde, München

In *Cur Deus homo*, St. Anselm addresses the objections of contemporary Jews and probably Muslims to the Christian concept of the incarnation with the aim of rationally invalidating such rejections. Notwithstanding its apologetic nature, an early form of a theology of religions can be found in St. Anselm’s *Cur Deus homo*. The present study analyses the last chapter of *Cur Deus homo* in the light of Anselmian reasoning, revealing how Anselm’s theology, with regard to both these non-Christian religions, is neither exclusivist nor inclusivist, but rather adopts a position which can be defined as “interioristic”.
Saint Anselm and a New Perspective on the Doctrine of the Incarnation

Luca Vettorello, Mailand

Why did God's incarnation take place? Would it have been possible for man to be saved without Christ? Moreover, how did Christ's redemption save us? Saint Anselm gave an answer that was particularly original in his time and rationally defended the validity of the doctrine of the incarnation in an interesting and promising way. In his *Cur Deus Homo*, Anselm suggests that original sin has spoilt the nature of man, although the Devil did not obtain from God the right to punish men; every action of the Devil just comes from intrinsic hatred. Therefore, Anselm underlines the necessity of the intervention of a god-man in order to restore the original pureness of human nature. But what is the dynamic of this process of salvation? I will first offer a new Anselmian perspective on this problem by developing some consequences of Anselm's doctrine of the incarnation and then suggest a new solution to the question of how the god-man defeated evil.

Menschwerdung und Dämonologie. Der dem Wilhelm von Champeaux zugeschriebene *Dialogus inter Christianum et Iudaeum de fide Catholica vor dem Hintergrund von Anselms Cur deus homo*

Bernd Goebel, Fulda

The anonymous *Dialogue between a Christian and a Jew* formerly attributed to William of Champeaux has very rarely been examined in detail. It is now usually supposed to be the work of an otherwise unknown theologian influenced by the school of Laon. I propose to take a fresh look at this carefully composed text that has often been misread as an attempt to rewrite Gilbert Crispin's corresponding dialogue in a more anti-Jewish fashion. The analysis mainly focuses on how the relationship between the dialogue partners evolves and what this reveals about the author's intentions, on the respective roles of reason and authority, and on the dialogue's overall argument – a rather complex proof of the necessity of the incarnation – and how it compares to similar arguments in Anselm of Canterbury's *Cur deus homo* and Odo of Tournai's *Dialogue with Leo the Jew*. In the final part, I argue that, very likely, the author of the dialogue is in fact Lanfranc's Norman student Ralph of Battle (1040–1124) or a close disciple of his.

*Interreligiöses Gespräch oder philosophischer Dialog? Eine Relektüre von Gilbert Crispins Disputatio Christiani cum Gentili*

Jörn Müller, Würzburg

This article offers a sustained reinterpretation of Gilbert Crispin's (1045/6–1117) *Disputation of a Christian with a Pagan* as a genuine philosophical dialogue. The traditional reading of this work (R.W. Southern, A. Sapir Abulafia and G.R. Evans) regards it as a kind of – ultimately inferior – continuation of Gilbert's earlier *Disputation of a Jew and a Christian*, a masterpiece of Jewish–Christian polemical literature. In fact, however, Gilbert tries out a novel argumentative approach in his second *Disputation* by the deliberate and pronounced use of reason (*ratio*) instead of scriptural authority (*auctoritas*) and thus opens a more promising route to the rational discussion of controversial religious matters. The article analyses the different philosophical elements of this text and argues that the dialogue between pagan philosophy and Christian faith established here heralds the beginning of a new and fruitful literary genre in medieval literature.
In the 12th century, the use of reason became very popular in Latin Christendom. Anselm of Canterbury’s theology is representative of the introduction of reason into theology. He is well known as a scholar and theologian for his approach of legitimizing Christian faith by reason and not by scriptural arguments alone. For this approach, he used the form of literary dialogues amongst Christians about Christianity. One of Anselm’s contemporaries is Peter Alfonsi. He also wrote a literary dialogue, but between a Christian and a Jew. Like Anselm, Alfonsi uses reason to legitimize Christian faith. This article first defines the understanding and function of reason in his work and secondly explores his dialogue’s connection to Anselm. A special focus is placed on the role of reason and its relevance for Alfonsi’s Christian self-understanding.

In his text *Dialogus contra Iudaeos*, Petrus Alfonsi (ca. 1060–after 1121) develops a hitherto neglected philosophical doctrine of God. He contrasts the anthropomorphic image of God in the Talmud with a negative theological notion of the unlimitedness of God and His dissimilarity with all creatures. Petrus Alfonsi further gives a proof of God’s existence — a unique approach among the *adversus Iudaeos* dialogues of the Middle Ages. He deduces the existence of a first principle which ensures the composition of all things in the world. God’s creation forms the basis for a rational justification of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, with the Divine Persons being identified as substance, wisdom and will. In the present paper, his views are contrasted with Jewish philosophical writings of the 11th and 12th centuries as evidenced in Saadia Gaon’s *Emunot we-Deot* and Bayha Ibn Paquda’s *Book of the Duties of the Heart*.

The open ending of Peter Abelard’s *Dialogus inter Philosophum, Iudaem et Christianum* (alternatively *Collationes*) has surprised readers since the Middle Ages. While the traditional interpretation holds that the work is incomplete, the fragmentary character of the *Dialogus* has recently been contested. Abelard’s failure to fulfill his promise and deliver a final verdict regarding which of the three disputants has won is often construed as a deliberate decision to leave the question of truth open to interpretation. Against such claims, this paper argues that Abelard’s *Dialogus* does indeed remain unfinished and that many of the topics announced by the disputants, most importantly the definition of the highest good itself, are never satisfactorily developed. After summarizing the main arguments in the debate, a hypothetical reconstruction of the dialogue’s ending is developed from an analysis of the *intentio operis* itself, the testimony of medieval readers and other works of Abelard.
Zur intellektuellen Auseinandersetzung des Thomas von Aquin mit dem Islam in der *Summa contra Gentiles* und in seinem Traktat *De rationibus fidei*

Markus Enders, Freiburg i.Br.

In this contribution the methodological principles of Thomas of Aquinas’s philosophical apologetics of the Christian faith are presented, both according to his small treatise *De rationibus fidei* and to his *Summa contra Gentiles*, the latter treatise being presupposed by the former. First, the apologetic intention of both writings against Islamic objections is proven. In a second step, the methodological principles of Thomas Aquinas’s apologetics of the Christian faith are explained. Finally, Thomas’s apologetic arguments against the Islamic objections are reconstructed and systematically evaluated.

„*Fœdera pluries*“ und „*Gnade gefunden … vom Anbeginn der Welt*“. Vorabrahamitische Religionen aus der Sicht der Dominikanertheologie vor 1280

Richard Schenk OP, Freiburg i.Br.

The essay “Covenants again and again. All who have pleased you throughout the ages” first recalls as a methodological context the complementary tasks of historical and systematic approaches to religious interrelationality. This dynamic was exemplified in around 1260 by Robert Kilwardby in his *Quaestiones* on Peter Lombard’s Fourth Book of the *Sentences* as a Christian theology of non-Christian religions. In an unusually bold programme, which he himself interrupts, Kilwardby stresses the graced character of non-Christian religions, using the covenantal theology of ancient Israel as a reference point for understanding both Christianity and non-monotheistic religions. The dialogue between monotheistic traditions had necessitated a consideration of non-Abrahamitic traditions as well, which provided the lens for this dialogue’s approach. Although in the end highly conflicted and “unfinished”, Kilwardby’s reflections point to the abiding dialectic of proximity and estrangement in Christianity’s relationship to Judaism and to other religions.